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ABSTRACT

In 1998, five regional conferences were held in preparation for the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (TVE). The Asia-Pacific regional conference focused on challenges of the 21st century, demands of the world of work, and changing patterns in the delivery of training programs. The European symposium covered five themes: vocational education and training (VET) and new technologies, environmental education and training, the changing role of the public and private sectors in VET, internationalization of economic activities and tourism, and noncommercial exchanges and vocational training. The conference held for policymakers and educators from the Arab states focused on the following: policies and strategies of TVE; quality, effectiveness, and relevance of TVE; renovation of TVE processes and contents; and application of informatics, new technologies, and networking in TVE. The African regional conference culminated in the formation of the Nairobi Action Plan for Technical and Vocational Education. The technical meeting on TVE in Latin America and the Caribbean had the dual purpose of discussing the main trends and experiences in secondary education reform in the region and developing a regional vision of TVE. (MN)

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Summaries of the regional conferences held in preparation for the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education

In 1998, UNESCO organized five regional conferences on technical and vocational education for the preparation of the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education to be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 26-30 April 1999. These events were to focus the experiences and needs in technical and vocational education of the Member States in those regions. This issue of UNEVOC INFO presents summaries of these meetings, which are expected to serve as contributions to the Seoul Congress. (the Editor)

UNESCO-UNEVOC INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

Adelaide, Australia, 25 to 27 March 1998

From 25 to 27 March 1998, the Asia-Pacific Region held at the Adelaide Institute of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) in South Australia, a conference in preparation for the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (TVE). This event, billed as a regional conference, was convened in accordance with the desire of UNESCO to involve the Regions "to help focus on the TVET experiences and needs of the countries in different regions of the world". Organized by the Adelaide Institute of TAFE, the Conference was sponsored by UNESCO, Australia Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, and Australian National Training Authority.

The main objective of the preparatory conference was to provide inputs to the Congress, specifically inputs to the development of resolutions and themes through addresses by renowned international speakers, debates and group discussions. Some of the participants gave keynote speeches, while others made brief presentations limited to particular topics. Over 100 participants from about 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific Region and beyond attended the conference.

The first of the three keynote speeches was delivered by Mr Colin N. Power, then Assistant Director-General for Education, who spoke on the challenges of the 21st century. His address covered the following issues:

- changing demands of the world of work in the twenty-first century;
- improving systems of providing education and training throughout life;
- reforming the education and training process;
- role of government and social partners; and
- UNESCO contribution to TVE.

The next address, given by Dr Munther W. Al-Masri of Jordan was on the topic of demands of the world of work. It explained the relationship between human resources development and vocational education and training; then explored briefly systems of vocational education and training and issues such as the school system, on the job-training, the dual vocational system, and evaluation. It explained also the various functions of the world of work in vocational education and training. Some of the functions pertaining to financing and implementation of vocational education programmes and identification of training needs were also described. The last keynote address (by Dr Gujaraj Dhanarajan, President of the Commonwealth of Learning) offered an exposition on the subject of the changing pattern in the delivery of training programmes. Its central thrusts were on how information, communication and technology were revolutionising education, in particular the organisation of schools, teaching and learning technology, and distance education techniques. The exploitation of the new information and technology changes made possible the solution of concerns of equity and access to education by disadvantaged groups.

The three presentations were debated by panelists in the plenary sessions, and in the subsequent syndicated discussions. The discussion in the group sessions focused on the proposed themes for the Second Congress. The participants suggested modifications to the themes. Another notable feature of the Conference were speeches that were given on the topic of international co-operation. Several case studies were presented on this subject.

The conference produced two sets of recommendations, viz, general recommendations, and specific recommendations on projects. Under the former it recommended that UNESCO should play a leading role in:

- assisting Member States to send key staff members to participate in appropriate international and regional activities;

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- offering professional development programmes in Member States in key areas;
- assisting Member States to obtain financial support from international funding agencies;
- supporting Member States in the development and implementation of national strategies in TVET to address specific socio-economic needs of these countries;
- encouraging and supporting the development of partnerships between institutions in Member States; and
- encouraging and supporting exchange programmes for students and teachers.

The recommendations on the regional projects drew attention to the UNEVOC Project activities in the Region, namely, the Entrepreneurial Skills for Small Business; Clearing House; Key competencies; and Studies. On the first project the conference called for publicity and promotion of the project in the Region; and for support for skills development for members of staff engaged in the delivery of the course on entrepreneurial skills for small business; preparation of learning and teaching materials; and for the collection of case studies from various countries in the region on successful enterprise training. On the Clearing House Project, it was recommended to extend the Clearing House function; strengthen the regional hub at Adelaide Institute and National Centre for Vocational Education Research; support UNEVOC Centres as National Clearing Houses; and to render expert advice and funds where necessary to help in installing suitable software and hardware and take part in relevant training. On key competencies, the conference recommended the setting up of a group of experts to conduct a needs analysis of producing a Key Competency Professional Development package for use or adaptation in the region. Lastly, the conference recommended the conduct of comparative case studies addressing issues such as funding and planning of TVET, and another to examine the feasibility of developing a qualifications framework for the Region. The aim of the latter was to encourage international co-operation between governments and institutions.

Apart from the core business of the conference, the presence of many UNEVOC Centres and Staff of UNESCO Headquarters and the UNESCO-UNEVOC Implementation Unit in Berlin provided an opportunity to hold a meeting of UNEVOC Centres and others from the Asia-Pacific Region with staff of UNESCO Headquarters and of UNESCO-UNEVOC Implementation Unit in Berlin.

The meeting made a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the UNEVOC network in the region.

(This report was prepared by Mr Leonard Elfson Munjanganja, Programme Specialist in Technical and Vocational Education, UNESCO Office in Bangkok).

UNESCO-OEEK SYMPOSIUM "VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN EUROPE ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE 21ST CENTURY"

Crete, Greece, 23-26 September 1998

The European Symposium preparatory to the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education was convened on the Isle of Crete, Greece, from 23 to 26 September 1998. Experts from all European countries, as well as the Central Asian States and Mongolia, were invited. The Greek Minister for National Education and Religious Affairs, Mr Arsenis, opened the Symposium. Albania, Greece and Cyprus were represented by their Ministers of Education; Lithuania and the Republic of Moldova by their Deputy Ministers.

The International Labour Organization (ILO), the European Training Foundation (ETF), the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), and the Commission of the European Union participated actively.

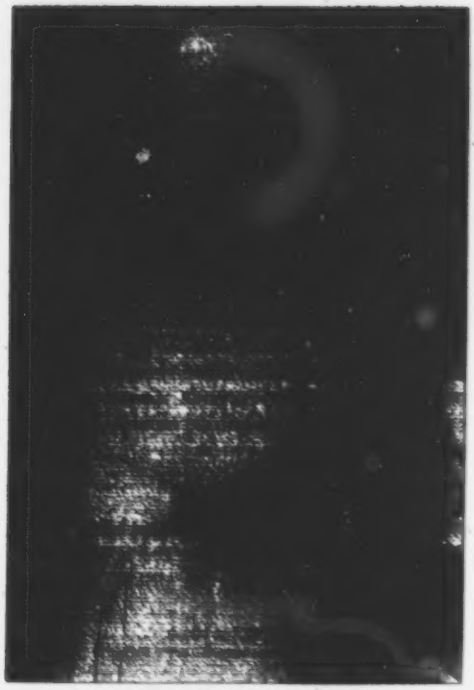
The Host

The Symposium was organized under contract with UNESCO, and generously hosted by the Greek Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK), which is a body with administrative and economic independence, supervised by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. The OEEK also acts as the Greek national partner (UNEVOC Centre) in the international UNEVOC Network.

Themes

The programme of the symposium covered five major themes:

1. Vocational Education and Training and New Technologies



A student of Moscow College of Hotel, Restaurant and Small Enterprise "Tsaritsyno" is happily demonstrating her culinary talent.

2. Environmental Education and Training
3. The Changing Role of the Public and Private Sectors in Vocational Education and Training
4. Internationalisation of Economic Activities and Tourism
5. Non-commercial Exchanges and Vocational Training

Outcome

Vocational Education and Training and New Technologies

It was stated that internationalisation of economic activity is promoting the application of new technologies and vice versa, irrespective of the considerable diversity of technological, economic and social environments in Europe.

New technologies have their impact not only on substitution of labour with capital, but they also elicit changes in work organization and of the qualifications required. Hierarchical structures are simplified, responsibilities decentralized, and occupational profiles emerge, change or disappear more rapidly than before.

Training of trainers on new technologies is a key to improving the knowledge and skills of trainees.

The use of new technologies such as computers, multimedia, networks, the Internet, simulation software for educational purposes generates new conditions and prerequisites for technical and vocational education. Distance education and self-learning and training play an increasing role in the acquisition and adaptation of knowledge and skills.

Environmental Education and Training

Companies and their workforces have an interest in some advantages such as reduction of energy, water and resource consumption, and avoiding waste by recycling and reusing materials and packaging.

Knowledge and skills relating to the environmental protection are increasingly in demand. Job creation and increase in employment opportunities in this sector are more significant than in others.

Key occupational sectors suitable for pilot projects in environmental training are:

- the construction industry (ecological building techniques);
- the plumbing, heating and air conditioning sector;
- the industrial metalworking occupations (maintenance and recycling);
- agriculture; and
- tourism (ecological tourism).

Provision of curriculum materials and teaching aids for environmental education will support a strategy of "greening the curricula" in the long run. Research, monitoring and evaluation of the impact will help to disseminate and apply the findings of pilot projects. Assessment and certification of the environmental competencies in initial and continuing vocational training are recommended.

Environmental Education and Training will have an impact on the Congress in Seoul. A Reference Document is being prepared, and its presentation will highlight the issue. This is an immediate outcome of the European Symposium.

The Changing Role of the Public and Private Sectors in Vocational Education and Training

A redistribution of roles and responsibilities of the public sector on one hand, and social partners (employers and trade unions) on the other, was suggested. Co-operation as well as competition between them are recommended.

The public sector was suggested to assume the initiative for addressing issues such as:

- equal access, inclusion and exclusion;
- establishing of overall goals;
- certification standards;

- teacher training;
- promoting innovation.

It was recommended that the private sector should contribute to:

- provide labour market forecast;
- implementation of TVE programmes;
- financing of TVE.

Appropriate communication systems to facilitate the harmonization of the interests of social partners were considered essential.

Internationalisation of Economic Activities and Tourism

The internationalization of economic activities induces a constant and rapid growth of the tourist industry.

In the field of training, the need for professionalization and diversification of tourism was underlined. Specialization of training in fields such as congresses, health, culture, and sports was suggested. Beyond linguistic competencies, there was a need to include the knowledge of other cultures. Environmental protection was seen increasingly as a necessary component of training of personnel for the tourist industry.

Non-commercial Exchanges and Vocational Training

Culture was referred to as a highly dynamic sector in Europe, due to the increase of leisure time, improving living standards, and higher educational levels of individuals.

Cultural activity was seen as an area of newly emerging jobs, while at the same time contributing to social cohesion.

Meeting of UNEVOC Centres

The day before the official opening of the Symposium, UNESCO held a special meeting for participants from UNEVOC Centres. Professor Chinien from the University of Manitoba (Canadian UNEVOC Centre) used the opportunity to officially launch the World Wide Web Site of UNEVOC Canada.

Report

A comprehensive 100-page report is available from the UNESCO-UNEVOC Implementation Unit in Berlin. It can also be downloaded from the UNEVOC web site http://www.unevoc.de

(This report was prepared by Mr Hans Krönner, Chief, UNESCO-UNEVOC Implementation Unit in Berlin)

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN THE ARAB STATES:
IN PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON TVE

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 1-4 November 1998

Participants

Representatives from all Member States and UNEVOC Centres in the region took part in the Conference. Among the total number of 60 participants were key Officials, Ministers, Directors General, Professionals, and Experts from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, U.A.E., Yemen, Palestinian Authority, UNESCO, UNDP, ILO, UNRWA, Arab Bureau for Education in the Gulf States (ABEGS), the Inter Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation (IAIGC), Representatives of the UNEVOC Advisory Committee, the European UNEVOC Network (OEEK-Greece), and Business and Industry in U.A.E.

Involvement of Students and Instructors in the Regional Conference

The Higher Colleges of Technology (UNEVOC Centre in U.A.E.) had arranged a videoconference to enable groups of students and instructors from different sites (Abu Dhabi, Al-Ain, Dubai, and Sharjah) to take part in discussions with participants on the Congress Themes.

This experience was hands on interaction between policy makers and beneficiaries in TVE on the application of modern technologies in the delivery of TVE.

Themes of the Seoul Congress

The national preparations for the Seoul Congress were discussed during the conference sessions and working groups. A keynote speaker presented the international-regional orientations for each theme, followed by sub-regional interventions and discussions from all participants. A short list of recommendations was issued as a result of the discussions.

Main Results

The Participants issued a regional declaration (Abu Dhabi Declaration) on TVE for the twenty-first century in the Arab States, emphasizing the following recommendations:

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Policies and strategies of TVE

- adopting national and regional strategies, policies, and plans for TVE that meet socio-economic development needs, and cope with technological innovations;
- developing systems, legislations, programmes, and curricula to cope with changes at the world of work, taking into consideration improvement of graduates performance;
- enhancing relations with the world of work/sectors of economy and production;
- mobilizing constant financial resources for development and up-grading plans and projects.

Quality, effectiveness, and relevance of TVE

- ensuring that evaluation of performance and outputs are parts of development and up-grading plans;
- including external evaluator from outside the educational institutions in the evaluation processes.

Renovation of processes and contents

Enhancing initiatives in Member States to have specialized R&D centres and pilot projects for:

- diversification of curricula and study plans;
- training of personnel (administrators, teachers, instructors) and;
- strengthening of relations between TVE institutes and business and industry.
- expansion of delivery mechanisms of Non-Formal TVET and Continuing Education TVE.

TVE for all

- promoting equal access between genders in TVET;
- ensuring the availability of TVET programmes for special groups.
- establishing specialized vocational programmes and production sites in rural areas and communities.

Application of informatics, new technologies, and networking in TVET

Enhancing the network of the UNEVOC project;

Increasing the use of international networking sites, i.e. Internet and WorldWideWeb in the development and up-grading of TVE;

Enhancing the application of modern technologies in the delivery of TVE,

such as:

- distance education and training;
- cooperative education and training;
- productive work in TVE; and
- new educational and training modules.

(This summary was prepared by Mr Sulieman Sulieman, Programme Specialist in Technical and Vocational Education, UNESCO Office in Beirut)

AFRICAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION, PREPARATORY TO THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (TVE)

Nairobi, Kenya, 23-27 November 1998

Introduction

The African regional consultation, preparatory to the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education to be held in Seoul (Republic of Korea) from 26 to 30 April 1999, was convened by the UNESCO Regional Office for Africa (BREDA) in Nairobi (Kenya), from 23 to 27 November 1998. The objectives of the consultation were as follows:

- to review the UNESCO's role in promoting technical and vocational education in sub-Saharan Africa since the first Congress in 1987, particularly since the launching of UNESCO's International Technical and Vocational Education Project (UNEVOC) in 1992;
- to undertake a policy analysis, based on previous studies, conducted either by UNESCO or for it;
- to adopt a common African vision based on identifying the challenges facing Africa in the third millennium, and an Action Plan for technical and vocational education to be implemented during the first years of the twenty-first century;
- to draft an African message on technical and vocational education to be addressed to the international community at the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education.

Organization of the consultation

The opening meeting on 23 November 1998 was chaired by His Excellency Mr Andrew C. Kiptoon, Member of Parliament and Minister for Research and Technology of the Republic of Kenya.

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In his speech, Mr Kiptoon emphasized the following issues:

- the consultation aimed to promote cooperation among the African Member States in order to share their experiences in the field of technical and vocational education, identify common problems encountered and successful innovations, and promote this subsector of education which is vital for the development of Africa;
- the consultation was organized at a time when African countries were facing enormous economic difficulties, which put strong pressure on such sectors as teaching, training, health and employment and it became vital to review technical and vocational education (TVE) policies, particularly with a view to reinforcing small and medium-size enterprises, the informal sector, and training for self employment;
- the conclusions and recommendations put forward by the consultation should place Africa in a favourable position for the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education.

Six plenary meetings (panels) were held after the opening ceremony corresponding to the six topics adopted for the Second International Congress. The six major topics were all related to the main theme of the consultation, namely, "Technical and Vocational Education faced with the challenges of the twenty-first century in Africa". The topics were introduced by high-level specialists, researchers, academics and decision-makers, who defined the problems raised by the various topics, identified certain issues, and placed them later in an African context, steering the discussions.

Conclusions of the Consultation

- The current technical and vocational education systems in Africa are not adequately equipped or prepared to face the challenges lying ahead for the continent in the twenty-first century. The globalization of the economy and the development of the new information and communication technologies are continuing to widen the considerable gap between the African region and the rest of the world in general, and the industrialized countries in particular. These inevitable changes require a new heightening of awareness and abilities to innovate, to help the African continent adapt to the realities of the world of tomorrow and to face the challenges which lie ahead in the third millennium;
- Renewed efforts are necessary to reform technical and vocational education, in order to improve employment prospects, organize training programmes for the informal sector, and restructure the entire subsector of technical and vocational education, adapting it to employment mobility, to employment-creating capacities, and to the worldwide globalization of employment;
- In view of the emerging economies of South-East Asia reforming their systems of technical and vocational education, to make them flexible, and compatible with modern technological change, Africa should rethink, restructure and adapt its TVE system to the changing technological context in order to cope with the challenges facing its development in the third millennium;
- Technical and vocational education remains the poor sector of the whole education system in Africa; few trainees are enrolled in this subsector, inadequate financial and human resources are allocated to TVE, the participation of women and marginal communities is low, and, finally, technical and vocational subjects are considered inferior by schools and universities;
- The current technological changes require revision of basic technical and vocational syllabuses, and also retraining to keep trainees up to date with these changes. A sound basic education in technology is thus a prerequisite for training and retraining courses. Coping with fast moving, complex technological changes requires a solid basic education background on which to introduce reliable technological training. There is also a need to reform TVE syllabuses in order to make access to this type of education flexible, facilitating the TVE systems to guarantee lifelong learning for all, i.e. which make it possible to return to training after having left to take a job;
- The globalization of the economy and the proliferation of new technologies, require restructured technical training and the provision of vocational guidance to cater for the requirements of the various categories of society: young people undergoing training, young people without schooling, the unemployed, those who have already been trained but need retraining, and girls who require to improve their situation in certain branches of TVE;
- Fast-developing new technologies affect the workplace, before being taught in schools. Hence the need to reinforce the interaction between the training and the workplace and overcoming the lack of qualified teachers for the TVE sector by drawing on the skills of qualified personnel in the private sector;
- The informal sector of the economy plays a major role in Africa. TVE graduates often remain jobless despite the immense possibilities for employment in the sector. Hence the need to promote the entrepreneurial spirit and incorporate training for self-employment.

- Particular attention should be paid to promoting access for girls to technical and vocational education, notably in the industrial sectors. Hence the need to promote a national policy on TVE for all, and to reject the stereotypes which limit girls' access to this type of training;
- In general, cooperation is needed at every level (national, subregional, regional and international) in order to pool experience and information and to mobilize resources, mobilizing national institutions (schools, companies and the UNEVOC Centres), to improve international cooperation in implementing TVE projects.

The Nairobi Action Plan for Technical and Vocational Education

The African regional consultation also drafted an Action Plan for the third millennium. After identifying the major challenges with which the continent will be confronted, the Action Plan elucidates a new shared vision for Africa in terms of technical and vocational education, setting forth a number of tangible measures to be taken, and addressing a message to the international community.

(This report was prepared by Mr Augustin Mario, Programme Specialist in Technical and Vocational Education, UNESCO Office, Dakar).

TECHNICAL MEETING ON SECONDARY EDUCATION REFORM AND REGIONAL MEETING ON DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (TVE) IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGION (LAC)

Quito, Ecuador, 23-27 November 1998

Objectives

The meeting had a dual purpose: to present and discuss the main trends and experiences on secondary education reform in Latin American and Caribbean region (LAC), and to discuss relevant themes in TVE in order to form a regional vision to be presented at the Congress in Seoul.

Participants

About 40 specialists on secondary education and TVE from universities, ministries and other public institutions of 11 countries of LAC (Cuba, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, Peru, Jamaica, Mexico, and Haiti) participated in the meeting.

Activities

The two themes of this meeting were closely related. Therefore, the two groups of participants had two days and a half to work together, debating lectures presented by invited specialists. Afterwards, they were divided in two groups – secondary education and TVE – to discuss specific themes of each area.

Main conclusions

The two groups

The two groups had agreed on a series of themes that deserve more concern and effort from the public sector and educational establishments in LAC:

- quality and equity: how to define and to implement;
- decentralisation and autonomy of local educational authorities, in each country;
- participation of civil society;
- status of teachers and training;
- educational evaluation – methodologies and utilisation of results.

The TVE group

The main conclusions of this group could be summarised as follows:

- In order to face the challenges and changes of labour markets in the early years of the next century, TVE has to build a new and broader approach in terms of focus, concepts, methodologies and technologies. TVE must be planned upon the labour market demands – and not on the existing supply of courses and training programmes; TVE has to be flexible, in order to reach the diversity of labour market situations, including the so-called non formal workers, women, ethnical minorities, first-time job seekers and disabled people; TVE has to prepare people to create employment – and not to depend on jobs opportunities that are rapidly decreasing; TVE has to be delivered to the economically active population of each country, not only for the poor people; TVE must be available for all, but should not replace basic education for all.

- This new approach demands deep changes in TVE systems. Most of the traditional TVE agencies in LAC – like technical schools and national training institutes – were founded in the 40s and 50s and are not able to deliver and to finance permanent TVE for a changing labour market. So, the countries should make efforts to build a broader network of TVE agencies, including many different institutions which have been working in this field, like non governmental organisations (NGOs), unions, private foundations, universities, enterprises. This TVE network should utilize public and private funds that are available for TVE, considering that public funds must be concentrated on basic education.
- The Government should have the strategic role in mobilising this network and giving guidelines for planning and evaluation of TVE systems. This strategic role demands also the integration of government institutions - ministries of education, labour, economy and finances. In LAC, TVE must be considered not only as an educational problem, but mainly as a question of social and economic policies toward sustainable development and democracy. The LAC governments should be stimulated and assisted in order to plan TVE according to this new approach.
- International organizations like UNESCO must improve their role in this process too. In LAC, OREALC should seek co-operation and integration with other international organizations that are more active in the field of TVE. OREALC and these organizations should also stimulate innovative plans and projects in TVE area, and create opportunities to disseminate and popularise these experiences. Many countries are already implementing innovative projects. But they are working in isolation, without contact with other projects in this area. Technical exchange should be promoted and supported by these organizations, throughout seminars, workshops, publications, information systems and networks.

(This summary was prepared by Mrs Elenice Leite, Programme Specialist in Technical and Vocational Education, UNESCO Office in Santiago de Chile)

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For more information on the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education, please visit the following web sites:

World Wide Web: http://www.unesco.org/education
http://www.unevoc.de/congress
http://www.tvecong.re.kr

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